

ROBERT KADEL

An Interview Conducted by

Martin Plascak

June 12, 1981

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NARRATOR DATA SHEET

06/12/81

DATE

Name of narrator: Robert Kadel

Address: 3026 Fenwood Avenue, Terre Haute Phone: 235-6570
Business: 232-5575

Birthdate: 08/15/22 Birthplace: Terre Haute, IN

Length of residence in Terre Haute: _____

Education: Terre Haute public elementary schools; Wiley High
School; Northwestern University (attended)

Occupational history: U.S. Air Force; owner, Kadel's Holiday
Shoppe, Inc.; professional photographer

Special interests, activities, etc. _____

For additional information, see Terre Haute and Her People
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<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Interviewer</u>
06/12/81		Vigo County Public Library Conference Room	Martin Plascak

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ROBERT KADEL

Tape 1

June 12, 1981

Conference Room, Vigo County Public Library, Terre Haute, IN

INTERVIEWER: Martin Plascak

TRANSCRIBER: Kathleen M. Skelly

For: Vigo County Oral History Program

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MP: This is an oral history interview with Bob Kadel, Terre Haute businessman, photographer, Air Force Reservist. The date is June 12, 1981, 2:10 in the afternoon. This interview is taking place in the conference room of the Vigo County Public Library.

Bob, first of all, where and when were you born?

KADEL: I was born here in Terre Haute August 15, 1922.

MP: What about your parents? O.K. tell us.

KADEL: My mother and father are both from Vigo County. Mother was born in Linton Township on the old U.S. 41 /and the Oregon Baptist Church Road/. She was born in a log cabin down there. Her name was Harriet Keaton, part of the old Keaton family in this area -- Buster Keaton and his family. They were all cousins, all born right about the same time.

MP: Your mother is a distant relative of the famous actor, Buster Keaton?

KADEL: Yes, Buster Keaton. He was born in Vigo County and was brought up here, and he's part of the same family.

MP: What did your father do?

KADEL: Dad was in business here in town. He started his own business /Kadel's Art Shop/ in 1906 at 125-127 South 7th Street. At that time he had a picture-framing shop. He was the first one in Terre Haute to carry greeting cards, too, by the way, of any kind -- commercially made greeting cards. And at 127 he had a business that eventually got started with Chamberlin metal weather strip. He weather-stripped homes in Terre Haute, installed overhead doors, stainless steel doors, revolving doors like they had in the Terre Haute House.

MP: How long was he in business, Bob?

KADEL: Until he died in 1955.

MP: He ran this shop in downtown Terre Haute for forty-nine years then apparently.

KADEL: Yes.

MP: What is at this location now?

KADEL: Let's see. Sterling Realty's there, I believe. And I'm not sure whether the other building's occupied or not. It's in the Fred Heintz block. It was all constructed by Fred Heintz and controlled by him through the flower shop.

MP: What can you tell us about your education? Educational background.

KADEL: Well, the biggest part of it, I'd say, was in Terre Haute, with the exception of Northwestern University, and that was right after high school. And all of our class, with the exception of myself, was drafted into the Navy. I wanted to go in the Air Force in the worst way. So I went to the Air Force. And that's the way it wound up. I wasn't in the R.O.T.C. [Reserve Officers' Training Corps] program at Northwestern, but most of the other fellows were.

MP: What high school did you attend in Terre Haute?

KADEL: Wiley High School.

MP: Wiley High School was the centrally-located high school in the city at that [time]. Actually [it] was a part of the downtown area, was it not?

KADEL: [It was a] very big part of the downtown area, and all the teachers took part in downtown Terre Haute. They were actually more-or-less historians of downtown Terre Haute. W. S. Forney, the principal, was a great fellow and so was [Vane] "Rusty" Rutherford.

MP: What was their interest in the downtown area?

KADEL: Mainly, I think they spent more time chasing

KADEL: students down in downtown than anything else. But they were all interested in the civic clubs -- the Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club, Exchange Clubs. The teachers were involved in just about everything that went on. And if there was a parade downtown, Wiley led the parade. If there was a big gathering in Terre Haute -- political gathering of any kind -- it was usually Wiley that was there in front.

MP: Was that because it was centrally located downtown?

KADEL: It was here. When we had our annual ball games, Wabash Avenue was the parade route for all the celebrating. And, of course, right here where Wiley was located seemed to be more or less a turning point for all the area transportation. The buses came here and went another direction. Streetcars came here and went another direction.

MP: When you say "came here," what do you mean?

KADEL: Wiley was located at 7th and Walnut. Of course, 7th and Wabash -- or 7th and Main at that time it was known -- was more or less a turning point. They went east and west and north and south from 7th and Wabash. So we were right here in the middle of things. Even the interurban went past here.

MP: That was also known as "the crossroads of the world," at 7th and Wabash.

KADEL: Right. Sure was! That was the good part about it.

MP: For the record, Bob, Wiley High School was located at 7th and Walnut; it occupied the site where the new Vigo County public library now stands.

KADEL: Right. It was torn down for that purpose.

MP: Yes. We'll be talking a little more about your schooling in just a moment. But I wanted to ask you, your father was in business then from 1906 until 1955
. . . .

KADEL: Right.

MP: . . . nearly 50 years in downtown Terre Haute,
and you succeeded him in this type of business --
greeting cards . . .

KADEL: Right.

MP: . . . and pictures and that sort of thing .
Let's ask you a little bit, when your father went
into business in early Terre Haute -- while you
yourself may not remember those early years being a
youngster -- what was it that your family or your
father told you about Terre Haute at that time?

KADEL: Mainly about activity in and around Terre Haute.
He always talked about the ball games, of course,
that took place out at 25th and Wabash at the old
ball park. He talked about the square race track out
at . . . in the area where the Indiana State Univer-
sity football field is now.

And he was particularly interested in the Wabash
River. He and several other businessmen had a
Wabash Valley Motor Boat Club there. They used this
club as a meeting place, not only in the evenings but
weekends. They had trips up and down the river. The
river was fairly easy to go north and south on at
that time. They had big parties on the river -- on
the old Reliance and Reliable down there. And A. O.
Gillis, I remember, was the commodore of the boat
club.

There were a lot of oldtimers mixed up in that
area -- Carl Stahl, George Krietenstein and that
group. And the Johnson brothers were very interested
in the river. The river seemed to be the place to
be. They had a club down there that I haven't been
able to find out anything about called "St. Jerome
Motor Boat Club." I'm still trying to find
somebody that knows about that club.

MP: Your father talked about it or . . .

KADEL: He talked about it. He has photographs of it,
but he just never, for some reason or other -- or if
he did, I don't remember it -- tell me where it was.
It was north of the old wagon bridge, but I can't

KADEL: remember much more than that.

And he did talk a lot, too, about the flood of 1913 because the people on the river there were very active in helping evacuate people in the low-land areas. He has photographs of the old bridge there with water going across the bridge instead of under it. It's pretty interesting. Early transportation in Terre Haute was quite the topic, too. He always liked to talk about all the railroads coming and going, about the new automobiles coming and going. Talking about Fred Heintz across the street from the library here, he used to have the first car of many makes. Whenever a new car would come on the market, Fred would be the first one to get it. And he was interested in transportation because he was the local agent for the steamship lines. And very few people can remember that, I expect, but Fred used to send people around the world every day from 7th and Walnut.

MP: So these were some of the things you remember your father talking about around Terre Haute.

KADEL: Right.

MP: What about . . . he being a businessman downtown, what were his thoughts about the actual downtown area itself -- some of the people who worked there?

KADEL: Well, he was always interested in downtown Terre Haute. And, of course, he liked to meet people. He was a member of the Rotary Club and pretty active in the Masonic Order up at the Shrine. So he saw a lot of things come and go in Terre Haute -- so much so that he saw the traffic pattern change downtown. And in 1933 he moved his offices and such to 709 Wabash, which is right next door to the Merchants bank building. Until after his death in '55 . . . well, it was in 1958 I moved the store from 709 Wabash over to the present location, 675 Wabash.

But when he moved down, he moved right in the middle of hard times in '33. And I think it was just about the same year . . . right in that same period we had the general strike here in Terre Haute. I can remember that real well because everything went

KADEL: sour all of a sudden. Bricks were being thrown through business windows downtown because they kept their stores open for the . . . well, for the public without paying any attention to the strike that was in progress.

MP: Were there any particular incidents that occurred at your father's place of business?

KADEL: Well, he didn't have anything happen to his store at the beginning. But there was a store located next to us, a pool hall was upstairs, McGregor's pool hall which is one place where all the college and high school boys hung out. We believe . . . I'll always think that somebody that was at McGregor's got wild with a cue stick and threw it through the window downstairs. Dad's store was one of the few that didn't have a brick through the window.

MP: Any particular reason for that?

KADEL: No. Not really. But he had been in the construction business -- in this weather strip business and such -- and he knew how it was to work with organized labor. And he just decided to close down while the closing was good, that's all.

MP: You said in 1933 the traffic patterns changed, and he moved his place of business from the corner of 7th and Walnut to actually on Main Street in Terre Haute. What do you mean by the traffic patterns changed?

KADEL: Well, I can't remember that particular thing too well; but I do know that the buses were running . . . the city buses were running on Ohio Street and on Cherry Street. They did not run on Wabash. There was not a bus on Wabash Avenue as such. The buses would run east and west. I think there was only one or two south patterns, and they changed right at that time. And it seemed like South 7th Street was beginning to be a dead area from Wabash down, and there were a few businesses down there. Heinls have always flourished at 7th and Walnut. But then again I could see after looking back and remembering how dad's old store was there on South 7th Street, that he was

KADEL: cramped for space. And the picture framing business was getting so big that he had to get out of there and get a bigger shop. And, of course, he kept going with the weather strip business which was real good. And when he got downtown he improved his greeting card business a thousand per cent. So all in all, I think that traffic flow was being moved towards Wabash Avenue.

MP: Well, you mentioned, Bob, the buses. You're talking about the year 1933.

KADEL: Right.

MP: Were buses running then along with the streetcars?

KADEL: Yes, they were.

MP: I didn't realize that because I know that the last streetcars pulled into the car barns in 1939. So, in other words, there were streetcars running in Terre Haute at the time and buses and interurbans.

KADEL: Right.

MP: And so, in 1933 then some sort of a . . .

KADEL: I'm not sure the year the interurbans pulled out because I know it was early. That's one part of it . . . I can remember riding the interurbans and going south to Sullivan and south to Vincennes on the interurban and over to Indianapolis. But I'm not sure the dates they pulled out of town.

MP: I was not aware that buses ran along with streetcars in the city of Terre Haute.

KADEL: Right. They were the ones that were huge . . . if I remember right, they were Whites and Reos.

MP: And these were buses that served patrons in the city of Terre Haute?

KADEL: Right. They were big yellow buses . . . yellow bottom buses, black tops, big heavy radiators on the

KADEL: front end, big engines on the front of the buses.

MP: And they ran along with the streetcars?

KADEL: Right.

MP: These were running before the streetcars . . .

KADEL: I won't say they were running before the streetcars. No, but they were running along at the same time -- still the Terre Haute Transit Company.

I do remember, too, there was a fellow, Otto Nicolai. It's kind of hard to remember him, but I do. I remember him pretty well back in that period. He was superintendent of the Terre Haute Traction Company. And he was a well-known man around the area. He still has quite a few relatives here in town, and it's an old Terre Haute family. [It was] just an old name that was connected . . . whenever you heard about streetcars and buses, you heard about Otto.

MP: When your father moved his place of business from 7th and Walnut to downtown, that turned out to be a better location, did it not? Main Street?

KADEL: Yes, it did, because there were many businesses between 9th and 3rd Street on Wabash. Actually, the main business area downtown at that time was between 8th and 5th. And there were other stores on the other side of 5th Street and the other side of 8th Street, but it seemed like the main traffic flow and pattern -- as far as pedestrian traffic was concerned -- was between 5th and 8th Street. And then there were theaters down . . . up and down the streets.

MP: We talked about your father being in business and some of the recollections of the city that he had talked with you about as you were growing up. What are your earliest recollections as a youngster? Did you work in your father's store or did you spend a lot of time there or what?

KADEL: Well, we spent . . . both my brother and I spent a lot of time up at the store. We'd go up with mother and dad and spend a lot of time there. When I went to Sarah Scott [junior high school], I would come up

KADEL: and help dad. I was kind of a janitor and window cleaner and everything else around the store and errand-runner. We used to have a lot of fun up and down the street.

Even when I was in grade school, I can remember coming up quite a lot.

MP: Well, let's talk about that for just a moment. What were your early recollections as a youngster of the downtown area?

KADEL: Well, mainly at that time I would say the transportation situation. Of course, streetcars were pretty big things at that time to me -- and the inter-urbans. You remember the traffic islands out in the middle of Wabash Avenue and the old policemen -- Mutt and Jeff we called them. McLaughlin and Rickelman were the police officers working the streets and alleys. I can see Rickelman out in the middle of Wabash Avenue directing traffic today. He was a big tall fellow, kind of slender. McLaughlin was a real short, kind of a squatty fellow. Between the two of them they had a big time.

We had good restaurants downtown. We had bad restaurants downtown, just like we do today. Of course, the department stores were real nice. At that time we didn't have the Sears store downtown. We had Root's and Herz, Schultz and Smith department stores. There was a lot of real fine stores up and down the street. Mason's jewelers, Biggs jewelers, and, of course, there were Gillis drugstores on about every corner in Terre Haute, along with Hill's Snappy Service. I can remember eating lunch in Hill's Snappy Service many, many times -- nickel hamburgers, as many as you could eat, and . . .

MP: Where was Hill's Snappy Service located?

KADEL: Hill's Snappy Service was next door to the Gillis drugstore at 7th and Ohio on the southeast corner. There was one at 9th and Wabash . . . 9½ Street and Wabash, behind Hulman's, which is still there. It's still in operation. I think Si Copra still runs that one. Then there was one on North 5th Street right above Wabash Avenue. I think they call that . . . oh, I don't know. Some kind of a hot pepper, something up there. That was one of Hill's places. He had

KADEL: several places around town. He had one at Twelve Points. And that was quite a place to go. Hill's always had good hamburgers.

MP: What were some of the fancy eating spots downtown?

KADEL: Berry's restaurant was one of the better ones. /The/ Goodie Shop, of course, George Martin's Goodie Shop, which is still here in operation. I think he was at a different location back then. King Lem Inn, /the/ Chinese restaurant which was real good.

MP: Where was it located, Bob?

KADEL: It was in several places in Terre Haute. One place was next door to the Rea Building on Wabash Avenue at 8th and Wabash. I think he closed his business finally . . . the last location was between 8th and 9th on Wabash. The family grew a lot of their own bean sprouts and such down in the basement. They kept going back to China. I think after the old man's fifth trip back to China, he finally stayed and died there. Couldn't get his wife back . . .

I'm not real sure of the whole story on that, but it was a pretty interesting family.

Let's see. Well, of course, the Terre Haute House was the place to eat. It was always, you know, the top restaurant downtown. And, of course, the Deming had a real fine restaurant over there at 6th and Cherry. Let's see. I don't know. Of course, Billy Joyce's place back in the alley behind the Merchants bank building was the "in" place for all the men in town. It's where you could find all the attorneys, the politicians, and anybody that wanted to do anything.

MP: Was that a restaurant and bar?

KADEL: It was more of a bar than a restaurant. /It was/ full of antiques. Today it would really be a fabulous place.

MP: What is there now, Bob?

KADEL: The Tribune-Star uses it for a warehouse, I think, back in that area now. And the ol' . . . of course, the Smokehouse was there on the alley. That was quite a famous place at the time.

MP: Now, when you were coming downtown as a youngster and your father was located here, Terre Haute downtown was a busy place?

KADEL: It was very busy, very busy. Traffic was busy every day and especially Saturday. Saturday just seemed to be a real heavy day downtown. Stores were open 'til 9 o'clock or 10 o'clock Saturday night, sometimes later than that.

MP: Was there any traffic congestion?

KADEL: Ooooooh, yes and no. Really, I can't recall any real traffic congestion in Terre Haute until the Terre Haute bus line went on strike back in . . . I think it must have been the '50s.

MP: I believe about 1954.

KADEL: 'Fifty-four. Before that time there was very little traffic congestion. People rode the buses. They were always full. It was different. It was at that time that the whole traffic picture changed in Terre Haute.

MP: Well, even before the advent of the buses, it is my understanding that we had all of these street-cars and interurbans that ran through the downtown area.

KADEL: Right.

MP: And with all those people walking the sidewalks and all, nobody got in one another's way or . . .

KADEL: No. Not really. Not really. You didn't see an accident on Wabash Avenue or Main Street, as it was called then, to amount to anything. You really didn't. Oh, once in a while you'd see somebody get hit when they'd turn the corner at 7th and Wabash or they ran over the traffic blocks there. You know,

KADEL: the traffic islands. They had little islands out in the middle of the street where streetcar patrons could stand to wait on the streetcars. And it's funny today when they tear up Wabash Avenue /for utility repairs/, you go down a few feet, you find streetcar tracks up on top of streetcar tracks and wooden plumbing, wooden pipes, and old, old plumbing in Terre Haute.

MP: What was 7th and Wabash, which was known as the crossroads of the world, like?

KADEL: It was used more or less at that time as a focal point for anything that happened in Terre Haute. If a politician came to Terre Haute, he came to 7th and Wabash. If there was a celebration for Armistice Day, it happened at 7th and Wabash. If there was a Thanksgiving Day bash for the high schools, that was at 7th and Wabash. Seems like everything happened at 7th and Wabash. There was the Terre Haute House on one corner and, of course, Hook's drugstore on the northwest corner, Merchants Bank on the southeast corner. There was a big cigar store (can't recall the name of the cigar store at the time), but it was on the southwest corner where Fanny May is. Of course, there was a pretty good-sized drugstore where the Terre Haute House coffee shop is now. That was a cigar store and sundries and drugs and such.

MP: So, the 7th and Wabash was the key intersection or key spot downtown.

KADEL: I would say that it was. We never thought of 6½ or 6th Street as the center of town. It was always 7th and Wabash. If they had a reviewing stand for a parade, it was at 7th and Wabash. If the streetcars wanted to go south, they turned on Wabash /at 7th Street/.

I understand that at one time 'way back they did go north on 7th, but I don't think that was for very long. The interurbans turned in on 9th Street and came out on 8th Street on Wabash. And, of course, their car barn was out on East Wabash, about /the/ 3000 block or so. They all came in, and they had to turn at 7th and Wabash to turn south to get to where they wanted to go.

MP: And South 7th Street was a heavily-traveled streetcar route?

KADEL: Oh, it sure was! Sure was. They went south on 3rd Street to the end of 3rd Street, which was Margaret Avenue at that time. /Later the end of the line was at Voorhees Street on Third./ That's all the further you could go on 3rd Street where south 41 is now. Helen Ijams /Benbridge/ lived there at the end of 3rd Street. In fact if you continued south on 3rd Street, you'd have to drive right through her house. She sat right in the middle.

MP: Honey Creek Square now sits on the Ijams' property? Do you know?

KADEL: Yes. On a part of it. I think they had other property in there, too.

MP: Bob, we talked a little about . . . you mentioned some of the department stores that were downtown back in the heyday of downtown. You mentioned some restaurants. What else was downtown?

KADEL: There were several theaters -- big theaters. And they were always busy, always. Every day they had good movies. They'd change the movies two and three times a week, sometimes four or five times a week, according to how good it was. The Indiana Theater, of course, and the Grand were the two big ones. And the American, the Liberty, Orpheum, /the Crescent/. Then there was the Hippodrome theater, which was closed for a long time and then reopened back about 1935 or '36 for use for the Kiwanis Club. Kiwanis Club had their Kiwanis minstrels and other types of minstrels that . . . Elks minstrels and such. Carl Jones, father of the one over at the newspaper, was more or less the director of these shows. He put on big shows, and they would pack 'em in at the Hippodrome or wherever they had their shows. Then the Community Theater and Children's Theater were always putting on productions at the Hippodrome.

MP: In the Hippodrome. For the record, Bob, the Hippodrome building still stands.

KADEL: Still stands. Scottish Rite uses that now. They bought it and have used it. Of course, in between times it was a production theater. They

KADEL: used it as the old Wabash theater for movies because they had torn the Grand down. They tore the American down . . . or they didn't tear the American down. The American theater is where the museum is now -- the Early Wheels Museum -- that Tony Hulman built. It still stands.

Another thing that's kind of interesting is the Crystal and Palace theaters that were downtown. Walter's bakery is located now in a building that used to house one of the theaters. I think that was the Crescent that he's in where the Federal Bakery was.

There were candy shops. Martha Washington candy shop was next door to the Terre Haute House for years and years and years. And when the Terre Haute House started closing down, it closed down, too, and left. The Fanny May Candy Shop on the southwest corner of 7th and Wabash.

Sears and Roebuck, of course, had their big store next door to Herz. Hook's drugstore was located at 7th and Wabash, along with John Chalos' shoeshine parlor behind it. And next door to John Chalos' place was an interesting thing we haven't heard much about for years. It was the old Postal Telegraph office. At that time, there were two telegraph services -- Western Union, Postal Telegraph. Western Union was located in the building adjacent to the Grand theater on 7th Street right north of the Terre Haute House. The Harry Hassinger family more or less operated Western Union there at the time. Of course, Western Union is still in operation here in town; and we've got that in our shop now at Plaza North Shopping Center.

Of course, in early days, too, Jerry Shandy was the postmaster, and he was more or less a federal figure in downtown Terre Haute. He was also a pharmacist. He had a drugstore at 3rd and Wabash for many years.

MP: Is he the same man that later became postmaster?

KADEL: Yes.

MP: We had downtown then theaters, department stores,

MP: specialty shops, candy shops and the like. What about . . . what can you tell us about the other services that were downtown -- doctors' offices, lawyers' offices. I take it all of those services were downtown?

KADEL: Seems that the majority of all medical offices -- doctors' offices, dental offices -- were downtown. My old dentist, Doc /Leonard/ Trinkle, was located in the Rose Dispensary Building at 7th and Cherry, which was a big medical facility that was owned by the old Rose corporation -- Chauncey Rose group. That was full of eye doctors, nose and throat, all types. Then a lot of doctors were located in Merchants Bank building. They were located in the Rea building. Doc /D.M., Sr./ Ferguson was one of the local osteopaths on South 6th Street, and he was there for many, many years.

MP: So, people came downtown not only to shop but to see doctors and dentists and . . .

KADEL: Right. Well then, there were big law firms which are still here. Very few of those . . . the big ones have gone. This Marshall, Batman and Day, of course, and Swango now and a couple of others . . . of course, they've been here for years. And there was the Lewis family. /They've/ been here for many years in the Chamber /of Commerce/ building. At that time, too, the Chamber of Commerce was a very active part of downtown.

MP: Where were they located?

KADEL: They were located on Cherry Street in the 600 block. /I/ think we called it the Chamber of Commerce building. Of course, they had other locations, too. I'm trying to recall the name of the fellow that was in there. I've known him but I haven't thought about him for many years . . . that ran the Chamber. And they were all active downtown. You'd see them downtown /Mort Hayman and then "Speed" Shideler/. They'd be out on the street every day. You know these people didn't stay hidden in their offices; they'd come out and see you. And Wood Posey, who was the mayor at one time and an attorney, would be out on the street. He was one of the durndest handshakers you ever saw. He'd be up and down the street all the time, stopping in to see you, have coffee with you in the morning, do just . . .

MP: Was that just his personality? Or was he actually politicking?

KADEL: Oh, that was his way. He was out all the time that way. Finally, they persuaded him to run for mayor, and he just kept it up. And there were a lot of people like that. George Krietenstein was like that. But he didn't get down to city hall for quite a few years.

Vern McMillan, of course, was part of downtown always.

MP: Bob, we're going to be talking about a lot of downtown -- what in Terre Haute history would be very well-known and famous Terre Haute people. But let me ask you this. There were a number of hotels downtown in the downtown area, too. I wonder if you might talk about them for just a minute.

KADEL: Of course, the number one hotel from way, way back was the Prairie House and then the Terre Haute House. It was rebuilt and in 1933, I believe, it was finally completed as it is . . . not in the present form because there's been a few alterations. But it came into being with several chains operating the hotel. Albert Pick had it for a while. Van Orman had it for a while. Then there was . . . Charlie Ellis took it over as manager, and Tony Hulman and his family bought the building. And it's been operating that way ever since. Van Allen has been manager lately, until it closed.

Then there was the Deming Hotel with Demas Waterman and all the Watermans. That was a pretty popular place because they had a ballroom as did the Terre Haute House.

There was the old National Hotel on North 5th Street. The Indois Hotel at 3rd and Wabash.

MP: Was there a Hollywood Hotel?

KADEL: That name rings a bell. I'm not real sure. There was a Nelson Hotel. There was a hotel here at 7th and . . .

MP: Was that the Central Hotel?

KADEL: . . . Ohio. No, the Central Hotel was on Ohio Street back behind the Tribune-Star. That was the one that Paul Frisz wound up being manager of.

This hotel . . . oh, right here at the south-east corner of 7th and Ohio. That Gillis drugstore was on the corner, and the hotel was on down the street and over it.

There were several hotels. There was one on North 9th Street. Well, /there were/ a couple of them on North 9th Street that were patronized mainly by railroad people and people that visited Terre Haute by train. It was easier to get to.

MP: What was the name of that hotel? Do you remember?

KADEL: Well, right off-hand, I can't remember.

MP: Would that be the Great Northern?

KADEL: There is a Great Northern up there. There's one where the Baptist Youth Center is on North 9th. There was a hotel, of course, at 7th and the railroad . . . 7th and the Big Four railroad.

MP: I believe that was the Great Northern.

KADEL: That was the Great Northern.

MP: When you say there is one there, you mean that there was one because it is no longer.

KADEL: There was . . . there was one there. They tore that one down.

MP: There are not very many hotels left in the downtown area, are there?

KADEL: No. Really there's not. Not in the downtown area as such. I'd say your biggest hotel facility is Indiana State University.

END OF SIDE 1

TAPE 1-SIDE 2

MP: All right, Bob. Let's continue our discussion about downtown.

MP: What were some of the landmark buildings?

KADEL: Well, back again there at that time we always thought the Terre Haute House was the center of everything because it seems like anything that happened in Terre Haute of any consequence happened in the Terre Haute House.

MP: And it's still standing.

KADEL: It's still standing.

MP: What were some of the other famous downtown buildings?

KADEL: The Grand theater building. Of course, that was the old opera building. And it received a lot of publicity as such at that time, as the opera building.

Of course then at Indiana State, the campus there, which wasn't too large at the time, was . . . the buildings were very impressive and everybody thought they were quite nice.

Downtown, the Sycamore building was built. It was the tallest building in town. It wasn't very large otherwise, but it was tall.

MP: It's still standing.

KADEL: Still standing. And with cracks on top, I understand, but it's still standing. In the downtown business area we always considered the traction station as kind of an outstanding piece of architecture. It was just a little different design.

MP: It's still standing.

KADEL: And it's still standing. The Hippodrome theater, of course. That was a . . . that building was dark and dreary and unused and had all kinds of ghost stories about it. Wiley High School was a pretty impressive place. By gosh, I don't care how old it was; it was still impressive to me. And I had always hoped that I would finally get there. And I did. Got kicked out two or three times, I guess, but we had a lot of fun.

MP: I'm glad you brought up Wiley High School again. Early in the interview we talked about it, but just very briefly. And we said that Wiley High School was located downtown, and I asked you what role you thought it played in the downtown area. I wanted to ask you, being a part of the downtown scene and with several hundred students attending the school, I take it from all over the city, where did these students . . . were there student hangouts then?

KADEL: Oh, very definitely! We had all kinds of 'em. At that time I mentioned Gillis drugstore. Gillis had a store at 713 Wabash, 673 Wabash . . . or 663 Wabash, I guess it was. There was one at 6th and Wabash on the northeast corner. Of course, they all had soda fountains at that time; and they made the doggonedest banana splits and cokes -- you know, fountain cokes -- and sandwiches and such. And we'd go there after school, at noontime for lunch, and other places. Bauer drugstore was about the same way. It was located in the 600 block on Wabash. And then there was Girton's at Twelve Points. And we always had to hassle the people at Garfield, so we went to Girton's at Twelve Points. This is quite an old place. I guess the buildings are still there, part of them anyhow. But our big hangout was the . . . as far as high school kids were concerned because at that time we knew we couldn't have beer and we didn't get the hard liquor, we went up to the old mill dam club, which is located on the north side of the old mill dam east of North Terre Haute.

Then there was Wassell's Wassell's was out on East Wabash, and Wiley would go en masse to Wassell's. In fact, today when you think about a teenage night club, the people of our era always think of Wassell's because Old Man Wassell and his wife rode birddog on us all the time out there. We had popcorn and cokes and potato chips and that was it! And a dance floor. He was in the music box business at the time, and he had all the latest phonograph records and that's what we'd do. We went out to Wassell's and danced. That was the "in" place, really, of all of them.

MP: For youngsters?

KADEL: Well, yes, for youngsters. And for adults, of

KADEL: course, there were all kinds of places around Terre Haute for them, but . . .

MP: Well, name some of them.

KADEL: Well, the Apple Club was a very popular place which was located now where the . . . I'd say it was at 1st /3rd/ and Davis Avenue which is about the location now of the big cafeteria down there.

MP: Laughner's?

KADEL: laughner's cafeteria. The Apple Club was right in that area. In fact, I think that when they bought, that they bought it from the owners of the Apple Club. And the Illiana Club, of course, was the big time then.

MP: And where was it located?

KADEL: The Illiana Club, it's still there today at Shirkieville. Everybody went to Shirkieville. (laughs)

MP: Well, you know some of these places that you've mentioned -- Wassell's, and the Illiana Club, and the Apple Club -- were some distance from actual downtown.

KADEL: Right.

MP: How'd the people get there . . . mostly?

KADEL: Model-A Fords. Model-T Fords. They went east by streetcar. But if you had a date, usually somebody had a car and you'd get out like that. But I know back when I was pretty small, even some of the fellas had horses. And that sounds kind of ridiculous right now, but they did. We had a pony and buggy, and we'd go out and have a big time with that pony and buggy. Go all over town in it.

MP: On the streets of Terre Haute?

KADEL: Sure! No problems.

MP: What were the "in" places? Let's say a couple wanted to go downtown or spend a night out on the town? You mentioned the Illiana Club and the Apple Club. Were there some places centrally located?

KADEL: Well, the Rose Room of the old North Hotel.

KADEL: That was on North 5th Street, I believe. And I'm trying to recall that because after I came home from World War II, it was all gone in that area. That was a pretty nice place. They had music up there, and it was just a real nice place to go.

And, of course, downtown were restaurants. People always wound up at a restaurant after a party someplace. Thompson's restaurant, which was 675 Wabash and finally wound up being Candelori's restaurant in later years, was a nice place to go. And, of course, the Toasty Shop was always kept busy because ol' Clarkie, he used to keep the Toasty Shop open all night. The best nickel cup of coffee in town and . . .

MP: Where was it located?

KADEL: On South 7th Street. Right close to the alley, let's see . . . 22 South 7th Street's where it was located. That was their address.

MP: It's my understanding having read something about early downtown in the period that you've talked about that there were a number of bars or taverns, if you please?

KADEL: A little later in . . . after Prohibition, there was the Show Lounge, Circle Bar. Of course, since then, there's been the Flamingo Room. There was the Smokehouse which was to become the Bomber Bar. The Smokehouse was a famous . . . catered to a lot of present-day show business people. That's where Burl Ives played the piano for beer.

MP: Where was it located?

KADEL: It was at the corner of the alley behind the Merchants Bank building on 7th Street. Actually, Billy Joyce's place was right behind it. Billy Joyce had his saloon back there until, oh, I'd say during World War II . . . right after World War II sometime. And it was finally taken over by Harold Bitzegaio and some other people after World War II. Of course, I don't think they wanted to stay there too long. It was just a fun thing for them.

Of course, George Oltean's been downtown for years. He still has The Office bar on Wabash

KADEL: that's been there for many years. The Marine Room at the Terre Haute House /and the/ Copper Penny bar at the Deming Hotel were fine places. Of course, if you really want to get down to it, in the early days we always heard about Madam Brown's and other places. And they were real good party places.

MP: Which, I think, brings up another point which is a very important part of the downtown area. I think you said the main shopping district was from 8th Street to 5th Street?

KADEL: That's what we kind of considered the main.

MP: On Wabash Avenue, but then what were the perimeter north and south? What were these streets?

KADEL: Well, I would say north about Chestnut Street and south, Poplar. And actually if we got right down to it, the shopping area didn't go north to Chestnut, but there were a lot of things going on north of Cherry Street.

MP: Such as . . . ?

KADEL: Well, the churches were up there on North 7th Street, and the college was up there. The college hadn't come quite so close to Terre Haute. The Lab School was at 7th and Chestnut. The Shrine Temple was at 7th and Chestnut. A. O. Gillis funeral home was at 7th and Chestnut which was . . . at that time A. O. Gillis and P. J. Ryan were the two really ornate funeral homes in Terre Haute. And, of course . . .

MP: What do you mean by that?

KADEL: Well, they were not a fancy setting but a real plush funeral home, you might say -- real plush settings.

Ryan was at 6th and Poplar and A. O. Gillis was at 7th and Chestnut. Of course, Isaac Ball was in town /on South Third Street/.

MP: Now, the southern perimeters of the business district went to Ohio? Even further south than Ohio Street?

KADEL: Well, I would say they did get down to Poplar Street because of the brewery being over on 9th Street after it finally got open. And, of course, the Lutheran Church on Poplar Street was a very busy place. In its earlier days . . . of course, dad went to school there, the German Lutheran school -- a parochial school at Emmanuel Lutheran. And, of course, the Citizens Independent Telephone Company was where the General Telephone Company is now, and Wiley being there and Wiley's annex was on Poplar Street. The football field and track was behind there. Later on they built the YMCA down on 6th Street. The old YMCA was on Ohio Street right behind the First National Bank, an old building.

There were a lot of businesses downtown. Con Harrold had his beauty shop downtown. He moved several times, so I couldn't . . . it's kind of hard to keep track of him.

Then later on, Henry Adelman came to town with his Steak 'n Shake restaurants, which were a part of downtown for many, many years.

And Poplar Street on down, let's see there was a funeral home at 6th and Swan. The building's still there, a beautiful home which was . . .

MP: What funeral home was that, do you remember? Would that have been the H. P. Martin Funeral Home?

KADEL: That was the Martin. You're right. That was the Martin. It was in the two hundred block /and/ finally turned into the Martin-Tearman Funeral Home. That's right.

MP: Any discussion of early Terre Haute, later Terre Haute, or whatever and particularly as it pertains to the downtown area of necessity I think must deal with what we call the west end. That was a distinct . . . that had a flavor or a character of its own. What about that west end?

KADEL: Well, we were always told when we were youngsters to stay away from the west end because it was a rough area.

MP: Where was the west end? What area are we talking about?

KADEL: West end I would say would be 4th, North 3rd, 2nd, 1st Street, Cherry, Mulberry . . . that area.

MP: What was it about that end?

KADEL: Well, it was . . . it was known all the time as the red light district for the early miners, the tourists, the conventioners -- anybody that came to Terre Haute and wanted to find a girl that's where they'd go. Madame Brown's place down there was, I guess, the central location. And it was quite a fancy establishment. It wasn't any different down there than it was in a lot of towns I've been in really. I've been in a lot worse towns. San Antonio /Antonio/, Texas, /was/ a lot worse than Terre Haute ever was.

MP: And yet any part of the history of Terre Haute mentions that end of town and, of course, as you say the red light district and all.

KADEL: Right.

MP: I was just wondering, was it really as bad as it's been painted?

KADEL: Weeeellll, no. It was a political thing I think more than anything else. Any time people are told they can't do something, they're going to do it. And I think that with Terre Haute at that time being more or less a mining center and a railroad center, transportation center . . . they had river boats, they had railroads and people going through town. It was convenient.

MP: Was it a big area?

KADEL: It was . . . oh, I would say maybe spread out around six square blocks or so.

MP: But when we talk about the west end, there were more than just houses of prostitution.

KADEL: Yes, there were. There was one of the best fresh vegetable markets in the country down there.

MP: Tell us something about it.

- KADEL: This was . . . well, it was moved at one time; but I can remember as a small youngster, mother and dad used to take us down there and we'd pick up corn, watermelons, all kinds of fresh vegetables, all kinds of melons. And this was located north of Wabash. I believe it was more or less Mulberry, at the time, on 2nd Street.
- MP: Would the farmers bring their produce into town?
- KADEL: It was a farmers' market.
- MP: They brought the produce into town, and it was sold there?
- KADEL: Right. Anything. Fresh sausage, a lot of fresh meats, fresh fish.
- MP: Was this done every day? Or just . . .
- KADEL: It was every day. Every day. Sundays, every day. Farmers would come in horse and buggy, horse and wagon, tractors. I remember when tractors first came in. They used to pull their produce wagons on the tractors and pull in there. And it was a popular place. It was always busy.
- MP: Well, in addition to the . . .
- KADEL: We need it today.
- MP: . . . houses of ill fame and the farmers' market, we evidently had some other things in the west end. There were retail establishments.
- KADEL: Well, the courthouse, of course, was at 3rd and Main Street; and at 3rd and Main was the Indois Hotel. A little later that kind of had a bad name because working girls were put out of their houses in the red light district, and they rented rooms in the hotel. Of course, that spread to all hotels eventually, I guess. Down there, of course, was the American Can Company in that area, and they had an awful lot of employees that spent a lot of time down there. And that . . .
- MP: Spent a lot of time down where?
- KADEL: Down in the west end.

MP: In the red light district?

KADEL: Well, I would say they spent as much time there as any place else. And there were a lot of saloons down there. Of course, I remember distinctly in the real early days -- you know when I was a little kid -- that there was a lot of what they called the brown cow's milk taking the place of beer and all the brews eventually that (laughs) we came to know. Because they couldn't get what they wanted, they got what they could get.

MP: Well now, why is it also that the west end has a -- true or untrue -- some sort of a reputation pertaining to sinister elements, the houses of prostitution notwithstanding? Were there gangster-type activities or shootings in the west end or . . .

KADEL: Oh, there were, but I don't know whether any of them were real serious or not. If it got serious, it was just because they made it that way themselves. I've yet to hear a real concrete account of any gangster-type activity. Oh, we know Dillinger was in town. Heck, that was real well-known. I know where he stayed when he was in Terre Haute. That was well-known because it wasn't very far from where we lived in the south end. And, heck, we saw him. That was . . . if you want to call that the gangster element. Of course, we had a few elements here that we considered gangster even though they weren't. The old betting figures and drinking . . . it all had to do with bootleg booze and gambling and such as that.

MP: Was that centered in the west end of town?

KADEL: I don't think so. I think that was spread all over town really.

MP: There were a couple of popular theaters in the west end.

KADEL: The Savoy and Fountain?

MP: Fountain theater.

KADEL: Oh, yeah. Yeah, those were . . . (laughs)

MP: Do you remember the Olympian which was a . . .

MP: the Chagares family ran the Olympian, I believe, a candy shop?

KADEL: Well, yes, they did. Gus Chagares. I went to school with Gus. And his family ran that and we went around there quite a bit.

Of course, another one too down there was the old Benjamin Schwartz family. They had a kind of a delicatessen on South 4th Street. That was one of the oldtimers down there. I should have mentioned them because they were in business for years and years down there.

MP: Well, when we talked about the west end, you made the remark a while ago that it sort of had a different image than the rest of Terre Haute. Was that general knowledge in the community itself?

KADEL: People knew about it, but they didn't know about it. They wouldn't admit it. And a lot of people would talk about the west end, and they would call it 2nd Street or . . . well, that's mainly what it was called, 2nd Street. The whole area had the name of 2nd Street. And people heard about it. They'd drive through there with their noses up in the air, and they didn't really want to find out what it was all about. They just knew it had a sinister appearance, and they didn't want to admit that anything like that really existed. But they read about it in the newspapers, that 2nd Street was having problems and trying to keep the girls in line and different names that . . . well, we all know a lot of the names. But they all came out. And people didn't want to admit they knew these people really. (laughs) It was a funny situation.

MP: Were there any particular stories or incidents that come to your mind about anything that happened down that end of town?

KADEL: No. One of the later ones, of course . . .

MP: You may or may not have been involved in?

KADEL: Naw, (laughs) I wasn't involved in too much.

One of the later ones that really not much has been said about, but I think you will remember this.

KADEL: You remember Nell Bandy. When her place was blown up . . . this has been in more recent years. But they'd been a pretty respected family in this community for years and years. I went to school with Max Bandy, Nell's brother, and they've been real fine people around here. And there's one thing I can say here, and I think that most merchants will back me up, that these girls from 2nd Street or the district down there would come downtown and shop. They paid cash for everything; they'd never want to charge anything; they'd look clean; they would buy the best; they were perfect ladies; they never gave anybody any trouble; and we always liked to see them come in. And as merchants, people up and down the street knew who these people were. And they spent a lot of money!

MP: You didn't feel then that there was a stigma attached to them?

KADEL: Well, yes. Because I was taught that there was -- at home. My mother and dad taught me that now really that wasn't the thing to do. It was bad. You (laughs) . . . well, it was just one of the things you stay away from. But after I grew up a little bit and got to know a little bit about what was going on, then I figured, aw, heck, these people have a life to live, too. What the heck. (laughs) I wasn't a politician.

MP: You know no discussion, I think, of Terre Haute -- downtown Terre Haute back in the '30s, '20s or wherever -- can be complete without talking about some of the people who were involved downtown -- names that some of us in later generations know or read about or heard about. Many of the people you knew personally not only from your recollections in business down there and your family business but in later years as you became a photographer working for the news media. Let's throw out some of these names and you give me some of your recollections. Tell us something about them. Of course, Tony Hulman.

KADEL: Tony was just something special even before I knew he was a famous individual, which I always felt he was anyhow. I grew up . . . my father was born on North 8th Street, and his family all grew up with the Hulman family up there. I had a couple

KADEL: of cousins that worked for his granddad and his dad for over 50 years each. I got to know Tony when I was a little kid. I knew him real well. And I always did like him. I've always admired him. And I'm glad I got to know him as well as I did, because I thought he was a terrific individual.

MP: Did he spend a lot of time downtown? Was he an individual that . . .

KADEL: Yes, he did.

MP: . . . easily seen.

KADEL: Yes, he'd come in and . . . the way it was with him before he got into the Speedway, he spent a lot of time downtown. And he was a pretty regular customer at Gillises. In fact, I think that's where he probably got started on his chocolate soda binge.

MP: What was that?

KADEL: Because he could drink more chocolate sodas than any individual I've ever known in my life. That was his favorite. Very seldom would you catch him with an alcoholic beverage. Oh, you would. I mean he wasn't against it. He drank, but he was a chocolate soda nut. And one or two would just be a good start. He never put on weight because of it, but he always had a lot of it. And he was downtown. He spent a lot of time . . . he'd go into Theodore's. He'd go down for a shoeshine. He would come down to the store and just sit back and shoot the breeze. I think if people want to say something nice about a guy, any fellow, he's one of the better ones to talk about because he did all he could. Of course, maybe a lot of people thought he didn't do what he should do, but he worked for what he had. He didn't get it all given to him. He worked for it.

MP: The company that bears his family name is still located at 9th and . . .

KADEL: Cherry.

MP: . . . 9th and Wabash there and, of course, that has been a part of the downtown area for many years, hasn't it?

KADEL: It sure has.

MP: The building I suppose looks today as it did way back when?

KADEL: Well, yes. His family put that up, and, of course, is famous for the old Farmer's Pride and Clabber Girl baking powder and several other products that have been known around the country. I think those two were well known. Tony made the Clabber Girl name well known around the world. I remember 'way, 'way back when he went on his binge putting up the Clabber Girl signs on every tree in the country. People got to know the Clabber Girl name.

MP: Let's talk about another famous name in downtown Terre Haute, a man . . . his name, I believe, George Krietenstein. And, of course, Krietenstein, there is the Boy Scout camp, Camp Krietenstein, which he had something to do with which at one time was one of the most outstanding Boy Scout camps in the entire nation. What are your recollections . . .

KADEL: Still is I think.

MP: . . . of George Krietenstein?

KADEL: Well, George built that camp out there in memory of his son Carl Mount Krietenstein. I forget the year it was built, but it was built for boys, and he was the president of the Boy Scout Council here. He was the granddaddy of Boy Scouts in this Wabash Valley. And anything the boys did, George Krietenstein was it. He was a Silver Beaver. I think he had other awards, too, from the national council. But he was . . . he was what we always thought of as Mr. Boy Scout. Delmer Wilson -- Skipper Wilson -- was the Boy Scout executive here. We always saw George Krietenstein as leading the Boy Scout movement. I can remember him, not only as a real young kid, but a little younger than that (laughs) because he and dad were real great friends. And I can remember . . .

MP: What kind of a business did he have downtown?

KADEL: He had Krietenstein Paint and Glass Company. It was located at 4th and Cherry at that time, southwest corner, I believe.

MP: I believe that that business is still in operation.

KADEL: Still here. His son-in-law, Herschel Tuttle, and I think it's Hersch . . . but I think Herschel has died. Herschel's son still maintains the business on South 3rd.

MP: For the record, Bob, Camp Krietenstein is located in Clay County near Centerpoint, isn't it? I believe.

KADEL: Clay County, Putnam County?

MP: I believe it's Clay County.

KADEL: Clay County maybe. I've been down there many times.

MP: So George Krietenstein then could be considered an outstanding or a key businessman during the '30s and '40s.

KADEL: Yes, I would say so. He was one of the biggest movers, too, in early happenings around Terre Haute at the boat club. He was a great friend of the Johnson brothers of the Johnson outboard motor boat and airplane fame. And he helped them get started. And also in politics in later years. He was pretty well-known in politics.

MP: What are your recollections of Fred Heintz, a Terre Haute businessman?

KADEL: Fred Heintz to me was kind of a granddaddy, because Fred owned the business next door to dad's shop downtown here. And he was always in visiting with dad, and we visited at his home down in Davis Gardens all the time. We were just together an awful lot of the time. I can remember Fred and, of course, all of Fred's family -- the Fowler family -- his daughter and all the Fowlers. We just loved Fred. He was quite a guy.

MP: He was in the flower business.

KADEL: He was in the flower business, and he was a

KADEL: Cunard steamship agent here in Terre Haute, which was a big thing at that time.

MP: Gus Theodore.

KADEL: Well, Gus was just one of the oldtimers around 7th and Wabash. In fact, we even called him the mayor of 7th and Wabash for many years. He ran a shoeshine shop, and he was just a well-liked fellow. He was in the American Legion and always in the forefront whenever there was any patriotic celebration. You could go to Gus for anything, and he'd help you in any way he could. He didn't have much money, but, of course, the background he had being an old veteran and coming from an old line of Greeks It was just a real fine family. We knew his whole family at church, just one heck of a guy.

MP: Another man that was a fixture in the downtown area of Greek ancestry was John Chalos.

KADEL: Oh, yes. That . . . well, that's Pete's dad.

MP: Pete, of course . . .

KADEL: Mayor . . .

MP: . . . is the present mayor.

KADEL: . . . Chalos. Yes.

And he /John Chalos/ lost a leg, and he had a hard time bringing his family up. He was in the shoeshine and dry cleaning business, hat blocking and so on /at/ 7th and Wabash for years and years. I wish I could recall how many years I used to watch him shine shoes in there, a nickel a shine. Now, I think it's about a dollar-and-a-half for the same thing. But . . .

MP: Is the shop still there?

KADEL: The shop was torn down. It was located in the Hook building, right behind Hook's drugstore at 7th and Wabash on North 7th.

MP: Vern McMillan was a downtown businessman.

KADEL: Very definitely.

MP: And later, of course, became a mayor of Terre Haute during the war years, World War II.

KADEL: Right.

MP: You knew Mayor McMillan as a businessman.

KADEL: He lost his wife earlier and he had two daughters to raise. He had his little business over here on Wabash that was going along real fine, and he had real fine people working for him. Del Humphries was his main man at the time. And under Del the McMillan Sporting Goods Store marketed several pieces of equipment in the athletic line that are still in use today -- a football mask, an air pump for footballs and basketballs. And Vern just . . . he developed a slogan, "It Pays to Play." And he really made hay over that little statement. He sold athletic equipment all over the United States. He had salesmen out everywhere. And he was just a fine guy. He went camping up in Canada all the time, took friends with him.

Then he got into politics, of course. He was Republican mayor during the war years -- during World War II -- and he wasn't too bad a mayor. He had a few bummers, (laughs) but he was pretty good.

MP: Was there an incident that you recall that Mayor McMillan was involved in, somebody took some potshots at him or what? What was that all about?

KADEL: Yeeesss. That was during the war years, too. I think the Traum family was mixed up in this over a girl.

MP: Were there some shots fired at the mayor?

KADEL: Oh, yes, there were some shots fired at him.

MP: Where was this -- downtown?

KADEL: Downtown. I think it was out . . . oh, I don't know. I got this story secondhand, but you know when you have people that were there and you hear about all this (I was in the service at the time) but I do remember the story.

MP: But you do remember McMillan as a downtown colleague of sorts.

KADEL: Very much. He was out all the time. He was up and down the street. And he participated in merchant activities, and he was a real fine downtown merchant. He operated a clean business.

MP: I see that another man on your list of people downtown, that you associated with downtown and that you knew, was . . . were (I assume that you knew them) were three other mayors. Let's talk about them for just a minute.

There was Sam Beecher, Sr. . . .

KADEL: Yes.

MP: . . . who was a Republican mayor of Terre Haute, I believe in the '30s.

KADEL: Yes.

MP: What are your recollections of him?

KADEL: He was an attorney in Terre Haute. Well, he . . . to my mind he wasn't the best mayor. But he was a Republican mayor and, of course, dad was a Republican, and I thought Republicans were pretty good people. But Sam did a lot for Terre Haute. There's still a lot of things I guess around Terre Haute that bore his name. About that time his son married Margaret Mitchell, who was the daughter of a professor up at Indiana State. Dad hired Margaret to take care of the records . . . phonograph record department in the shop, and we got to know them pretty well. And it was just another family really.

MP: Is there anything particularly that Mayor Beecher did for the downtown area?

KADEL: Really, I can't think of anything. I've tried to and tried to but I just can't.

MP: What about another former mayor, Wood Posey?

KADEL: Oh, he was a real fine fellow. I liked him a lot. I met him when I was a lot younger. And he was up and out all of the time. Even before he was mayor, he was around town. He was just one of the fellows you always liked to talk to. And he didn't

KADEL: care whether you were young or old or poor or rich; he liked to talk to people.

MP: When was he mayor? Do you remember, Bob?

KADEL: I don't . . .

MP: I believe in the '20s, wasn't it?

KADEL: It was back there in the '20s. Doggone, I don't remember the years.

But he used to come in and see us all the time. He spent a lot of time after he was mayor, downtown.

MP: In your place of business?

KADEL: Oh, yes. He and dad were pretty good friends and they would go out. We'd have dinner with them once in a while.

MP: What is the connection Another former mayor of Terre Haute was Donn Roberts. Now, I assume that . . . let's see. He was mayor I think before 1920 or about that era.

KADEL: Right. He was back in that era.

MP: Of course, you were a youngster and I take it your family knew him through the downtown association. Is that it?

KADEL: Yes, through that, and . . .

MP: What is there . . . what do you remember about Donn Roberts?

KADEL: Well, we lived on South 6th Street, of course, out near Margaret Avenue. It was a pretty nice area out there. And the airport . . . of course, Dresser Field at that time was located south of us about four blocks. And, of course, Donn Roberts had his gas stations all over town. You know he operated on a portable basis, and his gas stations were portable tanks on wheels. And he had those all over town. I can remember that so well. And in later years, too, I had his daughter as a schoolteacher at Sarah Scott. She had . . .

MP: Who was that?

KADEL: Her name was Von Leer. She had married Hunter Von Leer, the attorney. That was his first wife -- Matilda Von Leer. Matilda Roberts. And she taught at Sarah Scott and later taught at Gerstmeyer. And, of course, Hunter Von Leer I guess divorced her early and married Jessie.

MP: As mayor, Donn Roberts got in some difficulty, did he not?

KADEL: Yes, he did with . . . well, in several different ways. I've heard so many accounts and have read so many accounts. And dad told me several different things that had happened to him. And I guess that it was one of the earlier federal cases that amounted to anything in Terre Haute. Some of the early people went down with him, too, I guess.

MP: These were incidents pertaining to election fraud, was it not?

KADEL: Yes.

MP: I notice that you have on your list here . . . and we're not going to be able to cover them all, but I'm picking some that I think would be particularly outstanding -- Madame Brown.

KADEL: (laughs) Yes. The first time I ever met her was as . . . she was a customer of ours -- /a/ customer of dad's more or less. She had huge mirrors in her place, and dad would go over there and pick up these mirrors and bring them back, and we'd put these huge gold frames on them. I don't know what she did. I guess she had mirrors in all her bedrooms. But she was a real nice gal. Real nice. And I remember her back when I was in grade school because she would come in and she didn't care what the item cost, but she wanted the best she could get for her house. And she got it.

MP: Did she have any idea or care what people thought of her or about her?

KADEL: No, really. It was a business to her and to some of the other people that surrounded her and so why really get into her business? That's the way that I looked at it.

MP: Harry Fitch.

KADEL: Grand old guy. He was a meticulous record-keeper. He worked for Omer Rhodes many, many years in the insurance business at 7th and Ohio. Harry was a veteran of World War I and was adjutant of Post 40 American Legion for umpteen years. And as the adjutant of the Legion he kept a meticulous history of the American Legion all during those years. In 1929 he was the first member of the board of aviation commissioners in Terre Haute. In fact, he talked the mayor and city into forming this, into taking over the field that was to become known as Paul Cox field. And Harry since maintained very, very minute record of all proceedings, believe me, of Paul Cox Field and the building . . . the acquiring and building of Hulman Field as it is today. He was more or less the ramrod behind that.

MP: What was your association with him? Just as
a . . .

KADEL: Harry . . . I was in Post 40 of the Legion and I was associated too with the -- and after he got out of it -- the Board of Aviation Commissioners. And prior to that, I was a member of the Chamber of Commerce aviation committee that Harry was on. And we worked together on a lot of projects. And I knew his daughter and his son-in-law real well, and we always got along real well.

END OF TAPE

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MP: Well, we were talking about Harry Fitch. He was an aviation buff then.

KADEL: Very definitely.

MP: And you, of course, in later years developed an interest in aviation.

KADEL: Yes, and I think it was through him a lot that did this. Well, I won't say in later years. It was about that time that I really got interested in it. He was selling insurance to dad in business, and we got to talking about the airport all the time. We went down there with Bob Prox, and, oh, Harry Musick, a lot of other people that were interested in it.

MP: When you say "airport," you're talking about old Paul Cox Field where . . .

KADEL: Old Paul Cox Field.

MP: Where South Vigo High School now sits?

KADEL: Right.

MP: What are your early recollections of that air field?

KADEL: Well, when I first knew about aviation at all, there wasn't an airport there. It was across the field -- across back of Rea Park there along the railroad. And then Dresser Aviation came into being where Paul Cox Field finally wound up, at 7th and Davis Avenue.

I can remember early days there. Clarence Dowden was the superintendent of Paul Cox Field, and he was followed by others. And Bill Jones, of course, was the superintendent when Paul Cox was moved to Hulman Field. Well, there were a lot of . . .

MP: What kind of activity . . . going back now to the days of the . . . there was Dresser Field first, and then it became known as the Paul Cox Field. Early aviation at that time was centered there at the south edge of Terre Haute. /It/ later moved to Hulman Field. What was it like back in those days when the Paul Cox Airfield was in business? What kind of air traffic and activity went on down there?

KADEL: Well, T.A.T. had air lines that would come and go once in a while.

MP: T.A.T.?

KADEL: T.A.T. That was not TWA, but it was . . . T.A.T.

KADEL: was the name of the air line.

MP: This was an air line that carried passengers?

KADEL: Right.

MP: They landed at Paul Cox Airfield?

KADEL: Right. And Wiley Post had been down there. He was there in '31 and '32. Of course, he was killed in '33. I remember that real well.

Chamberlin had their tri-motors down there. I saw my first autogiro down there. The old Beech-nut chewing gum autogiro came down to Paul Cox Field.

MP: What was that?

KADEL: That was . . . actually a forerunner of the helicopter, I guess. It had wings on it, but it also had a big rotor on top. And it could take off straight up and /was/ more or less like the planes they have today that can go up and take off, like the . . . Oh, the Harrier does about the same thing; only it's a jet. It would take off straight up and then take off horizontally. Quite an airplane. But there were all kinds of airplanes down there. Bill Blair, a local fellow on South 6th Street . . . South Center Street, built huge model airplanes -- 10-foot wing span airplanes. He would go down and fly. And they'd take off and find them down in Vincennes or someplace.

MP: These were model airplanes?

KADEL: Yep. They were models but they were huge models. Ten-foot wing spans.

Harry Musick, he was one of my favorites because he gave me my first airplane ride in an old plane with an OX-5 engine in it. And Harry wound up . . . I think he died about three years ago down in Florida. He was a senior pilot for Eastern Air Lines.

MP: Did you then later take flying lessons at Paul Cox?

KADEL: Not at Paul Cox. I had a few at Paul Cox, yes.

KADEL: Before World War II. See, I had . . . a lot of the oldtimers are still around. Norm Orloff, who I flew with several times down there, is now senior flight instructor for ground training. He's just the head of the flying training program at Randolph Field, Texas, for the Air Force -- which is the flying training command for the Air Force. He was in the Navy but he is in the Air Force now working as the chief Air Force instructor for the Air Force.

MP: Well, Paul Cox Airfield was situated on the South Vigo side, as we said, of 7th and Davis Avenue.

With the exception of the airport, what was that area of town like?

KADEL: It was not too bad. From there south . . . of course, Thompson Ditch has been there a long time. Across from the airport . . . well, on the northwest corner of the airport was the Apple Club. Marie Gregory had the Apple Club up there. And that was a nice place -- supper club.

Across the road from that, of course, was the Ijams farm to the west. And the Ijams farm, of course, in the days when I was young, was pretty active with a lot of horses -- race horses, harness horses. And we always went over and watched the harness horses work there.

Then south of there was not much of anything. Honey Creek was south of there, and we'd go swimming in Honey Creek from the airport. But the airport, to me, was just a place . . . the only place to be after school. A lot of kids would go play baseball or something, but I'd go to the airport.

MP: And then you, of course, had developed this interest in aviation. Did you then become a pilot?

KADEL: Yeah. Half sort (laugh) of way, you might say.

MP: Tell us a little bit about you. I take it it was from there then that evolved . . . that you eventually ended up in the service.

KADEL: Yes. I got in the service in 1941 before the war started, and I went to Randolph Field, Texas.

KADEL: That's the first place I went. Went through several training schools. Let's see. It was Randolph . . . Parks Air College in St. Louis and Randolph and Kelly Field, Texas. I went to Harlingen, Texas, gunnery school and /Las Vegas gunnery school and others/ went on . . . I don't know . . .

MP: What was, specifically, your assignment in World War II, Bob?

KADEL: Well, actually, it was public relations. Really it wasn't, but it was. (laughs) We were assigned to the Secretary of War for Air, Secretary . . . I think that's what he was. Under General /Hap/ Arnold. And whatever he wanted our little group to do, we did.

MP: Did you meet the General or know him or . . .

KADEL: General Arnold?

MP: Yes.

KADEL: Yes. He was quite a guy.

/A portion of the interview has been deleted here because it has been considered classified information. The interview continues after a pause./

MP: What other . . . That must have been an interesting assignment. And this was your . . . mostly what you did during the Second World War?

KADEL: Yes. I . . . worked out of Bolling Field and the Pentagon and with several people. I don't know. I just liked to get mixed up in those things and just kept at it.

MP: Well, I understand that also during the war you flew "the Hump" /across the Himalaya Mountains to China/.

KADEL: Yes, well, that was the China-Burma-India. That was later. In the war we went to China and Burma and India. And, of course, the Hump was just a name more or less to get over to China -- just a route there to fly to China. And . . .

MP: Was that a difficult flight?

KADEL: Weell, at certain times of the year it was. They had the monsoons. You get bad weather. It was rough flying, yes. There was a lot of lives lost over there. We were still working for the same people. It was just in another location because I wanted to move around and some of the other fellows wanted to move around, so that's what we did.

MP: You must have had some very . . . due to your assignment . . . a lot of your assignment, you must have had some interesting experiences during the war. More so I think than the average person.

KADEL: Well, yes. You . . . people don't believe you though. That's the biggest trouble about that.

MP: Well, tell us something about some of your experiences.

KADEL: Well, meeting people is one thing, but doing things is another, you know. You can meet people anytime. But I think a couple of rescue missions we went on in bad terrain, bad territory was about the best thing I ever did. We'd go into Tibet. I remember one thing that kind of got to me. We had gotten back from this one particular mission when we heard that Lowell Thomas had a big spread in Time and Life magazines about his being the first white man in to see the Dalai Lama in Tibet, Lhasa. And we'd been out of there six weeks before he went in. We went in to . . . three of us went in to pick up a crew of a B-24 that had gone down in Tibet and the Lhasans . . . the people took us in the Lhasa. I had a picture taken. One of the other fellas with us took a picture of me with the Dalai Lama on my lap. And Lowell Thomas came out and said he was the first white man in there. (laughs) Well, I couldn't figure out whether that was right or not. I was kind of wondering after that.

But the other fellows (one of them was a captain in the search and rescue outfit and a master sergeant was with him), they were actually rescue specialists. That was . . . they were good. And rough and tumble, all this. And before we left there . . . we were given the royal treatment really -- in Lhasa -- because they didn't know what we were . . . what white people were. But some of the followers of the

KADEL: Dalai Lama had been to the States for school, and they could speak English with a very definite Oxford accent. I mean they were good. And so we had a pretty good time there. And before we left, they gave each one of us one of their little dogs with a name about six inches long.

MP: Live dogs?

KADEL: Live dogs. We couldn't bring them home though. This is one of those things.

MP: What did you do with them?

KADEL: They're still over in England . . . or they were. (laughs) I don't know. But they wouldn't let us bring them home. They didn't have the proper vaccination.

MP: You then met the Dalai Lama?

KADEL: Yes.

MP: Which at that time later then became famous in the news.

KADEL: He still is, I guess.

We've often thought about . . . Helen and I have thought about trying to get to him someplace.

MP: Helen is your wife?

KADEL: My wife, yes. We wrote to him once and we got an answer; but they didn't know how long they'd be around the States, you know.

MP: It's my understanding, too, that you came to know Earl Mountbatten.

KADEL: Well, he was the Supreme Allied Commander /South East Asia Command (SEAC)/ and, of course, in this business you get to know the leaders pretty well. And he was the leader -- he and Wingate Actually, they called him the "Supremo." He was the Supreme Allied Commander. Wingate was under him; Stillwell was under him; Chennault was under him; Wicdemeyer was under him; all the brass. Actually, he was the top boss. And he worked out of Kandy, Ceylon, but he was also up in Burma which he later became . . . you know . . .

MP: Do you have a Mountbatten story that you could reveal to us?

KADEL: Well, there's a couple of good ones. He did receive an injury to one eye and almost lost an eye. And at the time, I didn't know this fellow, this one medic. Never met him in my life. His name is Schie. It's pronounced several different ways, I guess. Now it's Schie Eye Institute up in the East.

I know that Lord Louis was injured (he forgot to duck) and he almost lost an eye. This doctor, the medic, took care of his eye and operated on his eye and has since worked on him several times. But it came out that Lord Louis was about dead. In fact, he was dead a couple of times according to all the news reports that came out. But all it was was this eyeball that popped out and had to get it replaced. It came out and he needed some type of protection, because he had to do a little work out in the area. And running around in Burma if you don't have protection on your head, you're in trouble because the sun will get to you or the trees will get to you -- the limbs and such.

I was out shaving, and he popped out and came over and /said, / "Kadel, let me borrow your pot." And he took the pot I was shaving in . . . was using. You know, the helmet to shave in. I had it full of water and was shaving. He took that and turned it upside down on his head -- soap, water and all. And /it/ went right down all over him. He had his eye bandaged up and so he had to get his eye re-bandaged. That was kind of a cute little story I thought that was just kind of funny, but Aw, he was in all kinds of situations over there. I was with him quite a long time.

MP: He was a famous, of course, World War II figure.

KADEL: Oh, yes.

MP: And unfortunately, it has not been too many years ago, of course, he was killed as a result, I believe, of some sort of an attack.

KADEL: An Irish . . .

MP: Well, now I neglected to ask you earlier and I

MP: should have. Your duties then consisted of media relations . . . public relations work but they included photography, I take it?

KADEL: Yes. It was mostly photography and reporting. Right.

MP: Were there any other people of the Mountbatten stature that you came in contact with?

KADEL: Oh, yes. Yes, we've met quite a few of them, since. Well, at that time over there there was "Flip" Cochran. Heck, he was real famous, worldwide.

MP: Who?

KADEL: Flip Cochran, a comic strip character /Steve Canyon/. He was commander of the First Air Commandos. And First Air Commandos was one of Mountbatten's little babies over there. And, of course, /there were/ General Stillwell, General Chennault. General Wingate was the British commander and chief of staff and such as that.

MP: You met all of these individuals?

KADEL: Yes. We worked with all of them and I've photographed all of them, and I've talked to all of them at great length. And, of course, when you're sitting out in a jungle, what else is there to do?

MP: What about MacArthur? Did you ever meet him?

KADEL: Never did. Never did meet MacArthur.

MP: I take it that . . . was your assignment in the Pacific as opposed to the European?

KADEL: No, it was in . . . mine actually was Southeast Asia.

MP: Southeast Asia.

KADEL: And China.

MP: Um hm.

KADEL: Southeast Asia considered . . . let's see. It

KADEL: consisted of India, Burma, Vietnam. Well, Tibet was at the edge of it, but really that wasn't considered it. And Siam, which is Thailand, and Cambodia, which was something else at the time. But that was the area we were in.

MP: Did you ever meet General Chennault?

KADEL: Oh, yes, a lot of times.

MP: He, of course, is very famous with the Flying Tigers.

KADEL: Yes. Yes. Quite a bit.

And Clair Chennault . . . and I met his wife, Ann, several times. And we'll probably see her in another month or so. She's coming up to a meeting of the old China-Burma-India group.

MP: Do you have reunions?

KADEL: In Cedar Rapids. Yes.

MP: Did you meet any of the U.S. Naval people? For example, Admiral William F. Halsey?

KADEL: No. The only time I met any . . .

MP: You were . . . I think you said though . . . excuse me, you said you were connected though with the Air Force, were you not?

KADEL: With the Air Force. I met those Navy people when we'd go to these conferences. That would be the only place. Or over at General Arnold's home over in Fort Lee.

MP: What kind of an individual was Hap Arnold? He was a five-star general.

KADEL: He's one of the finest individuals I've ever known in my life. He was a happy-go-lucky guy. He knew what he wanted, and he was going to be damned if he didn't get it. (laughs) That was his attitude. And his wife was a real fine gal. They got along

KADEL: real well and from all appearances . . . now this is just from my own observations. Because we would have to take films over to his home in Fort Lee, Virginia, at night and run off news rushes for him on what we did. And General Arnold, General James Doolittle, General George C. Marshall, would all congregate. And they would all . . . boy, they would scrutinize this film and they'd tear it apart. You wouldn't believe . . . how much they'd really tear it apart.

MP: You ran film for them?

KADEL: They were all three real fine people.

MP: Were you the projectionist? Is that what you'd do?

KADEL: Well, I just brought the film over. We had a projectionist there that ran it off.

MP: Well, were you privy to sit in the same room where they . . .

KADEL: Well, we sat there, yes. And they wanted . . .

MP: . . . where they reviewed the film?

KADEL: Well, they wanted to know what it was all about. You know, what this was, that was, and so on. Well, there was two fellows. Two of us that . . .

MP: Marshall, Arnold and who else did you say?

KADEL: Jimmie Doolittle.

MP: Three of the most famous military figures to come out of World War II. I was going to ask you about . . . if he is still living -- Jimmie Doolittle.

KADEL: Quite a guy. He still knows it. He remembers this so well. Anytime I run onto him, we start talking about it.

MP: Jimmie Doolittle, of course, is a hero to . . . I guess you'd say a hero . . .

KADEL: He was my hero before the war started even.

MP: Because of his . . . the Doolittle raid.

KADEL: Yes. Well, it was before that. When he was racing airplanes.

MP: What was your association? What kind of a remembrance do you have of Jimmie Doolittle?

KADEL: I remember Jimmie Doolittle as a guy walking down the street. First time I met him, he was walking down the street in Fort Myers, Virginia, with his shirt sleeves rolled up which was against regulations. He had on a funny-looking belt which was, of course, his prerogative to wear because he was a general. He could make up his own uniform. Came down with his shirt unbuttoned down to his navel, and here's his stars hanging on his collar. And not too far behind him was General George C. Marshall, who looked just about the same way. And they were in uniform. (laughs) And they looked like they had just come out of an alley someplace. But they were all coming down to General Arnold's house, and that's the first time I met him. I didn't know him at all. I'd heard about him, you know.

I can remember this time so well because I remember they looked like a couple of stumblebuns.

MP: What year was this, Bob, do you remember?

KADEL: Nineteen hundred forty-two.

MP: Was this before or after the Doolittle raid on Tokyo?

KADEL: The Doolittle raid was in '43 . . .

MP: April.

KADEL: . . . and they worked out of . . . I'm just trying to remember. It was after.

MP: After the raid?

KADEL: After that raid.

MP: Of course, see then he was a big hero in this country.

KADEL: Yes. And I had had the opportunity to go down to Eglin Field, Florida, down there for a couple of months, and saw the area where they had been making their practice take-offs. They had a carrier deck laid out in fields, that's where they did all their practice work for their /upcoming/ raids. Then I could go back . . . I had something to talk about then. "Why I saw where you guys practiced. I knew what you were doing before you went," you know.

MP: What'd Doolittle say?

KADEL: (laughs) Well, he said, "You must have been at Eglin." I said, "I sure was." And from then on, we got along pretty well. I was just a little kid then.

MP: Well, you say you were a little kid. You were in the service. How old were you?

KADEL: I don't know. I think I was 20 at that time.

MP: Doolittle, as I told you, is still living and the Doolittle raiders have an annual reunion. Do you keep in touch with Doolittle?

KADEL: Well, I see him He shows up at several of these get-togethers that they have.

MP: Does he remember you?

KADEL: Well, I don't think he remembers me because I remember him, but why would he want to remember a guy like me? But . . . now Lord Louis /Mountbatten/ did. I know that he remembered me.

MP: You were a personal friend of Mountbatten's?

KADEL: Well, we spent a lot of time together -- day and night.

MP: Bob, is it through Mountbatten that you were able to meet some of the royal family?

KADEL: Well, yes, it was through . . . actually through their instigation . . . through his instigation. And actually it's been because of him that we've been able to do this. We were to get together last year.

KADEL: In 1980 there were six of us that were going to get together for a little, more or less, reunion -- just six of us. And it had been planned for a couple of years because a couple of fellows couldn't get there. One of them comes from Capetown, South Africa. And we were going to get together over in London before the Burma Star reunion which he /Mountbatten/ was associated with. Actually, I think he was one of the instigators of it. And so that /after/ he was killed, the invitation still stayed that we should go over to his home. So last year -- 1980 -- in April Helen and I went over and toured England and wound up in London. And we were invited to tea at Lord Louis's home in . . . well, it's in Romsey near Southampton. We went out there, were met by Lady Romsey who will be the next Lady Mountbatten. And we had quite a time out there.

And this year we went back and she heard about it. She was to have a baby, in fact, the 15th of this month, and she was pretty good size. So she and her husband, Lord Romsey, were both down there to meet us at Romsey Abbey, where Lord Louis is buried. They had a memorial service set up there in the abbey for us, and we went in. They had his tomb completed. It's real nice, beautiful abbey where he's buried.

MP: So you went ahead with the reunion despite the fact that he was killed?

KADEL: Yes. And they're coming over here in October of this year. We're going to have a little get-together in Washington. We're going to have a three- or four-day party there in Washington. (laughs)

/Another portion of the tape has been deleted here.
The interview continues after a long pause./

MP: How long were you with General Arnold?

KADEL: Well, let's see. I got with Arnold . . . the first work we did with him was in '42. And you know in '42 the Pentagon was just a thinkin' thing really. It wasn't a real big deal like it turned out to be. But really I got together with him more the end of '42 and '43, then. You know, really got in with him good.

MP: How'd it happen that you got to be selected with him? Was it just chance?

KADEL: Well, when I was down around Randolph Field, I got talking to a fellow that had been to a school in New York, and I told him that I wanted to get to the same school. It was run by Life magazine. And so he wrote to Life, and Life wrote back to me. And /I/ said I was interested in it and I would like to go. And I . . . sure, I'd like to go. And so it was set up through the Department of the Army Air Corps secretary . . . Secretary of War for Air. I guess that's the way it was. Close to that anyhow.

But I got up there and went through this school that Time had and did some work up there. And we had some photographs published, and it was on the Air Force -- Army Air Corps. I got back down to Washington and was transferred to Bolling Field -- the 16th photo unit up there. And my job then . . . when they took me over to the Pentagon, that's where it got started. I don't know . . .

MP: And somehow by luck or whatever, you got associated with General Arnold.

KADEL: You don't remember Ruth Mary Morton, I don't believe.

MP: Who?

KADEL: Ruth Mary Morton.

MP: No.

KADEL: Well, she was the gal at WBOW that wrote all the copy. I mean she wrote everything over there at WBOW prior to World War II. She wrote all Luke Walton's copy and Ralph Tucker's and Jackson's and . . . oh, what's his name -- the head of the Spectator?

MP: Ferrell Rippetoe?

KADEL: Ferrell Rippetoe. But Ruth Mary got in service, too, about the same time I did. She got in the Women's Army Corps. And she was in . . . she was

KADEL: the head of the Women's Army Corps public relations in the Pentagon. And I ran into her the first day I was in the Pentagon. And that's a big place to run into anybody. And she asked me what I was doing, and I told her what I was doing. She told me what she was doing. And so we got together a few times after that, and things just kinda jelled from there on. And because she was working right with the same people for the Army that I was working with for the Air Corps and this got us together real close there.

MP: Well, being a general of the Air Force, Arnold traveled everywhere, did he in the . . .

KADEL: Not really. He didn't travel everywhere. He did a lot of traveling but not a lot either, you know.

MP: We've talked . . . you have met world leaders, military figures at the time who later, of course, became distinguished as world leaders. Churchill particularly and, of course, Stalin was a world leader at that time.

Was it your experience to meet then any of the enemy -- in other words, after the war some of the Japanese generals who later were put on trial or any of that?

KADEL: No. I haven't met any of those people. Sometimes I wished I could. I'd probably have said something I shouldn't have. But no, we couldn't say a whole lot about what we were doing. We did a lot of things that's not really known today, really, when we were overseas.

MP: At the time it was top secret?

KADEL: Yes, it was.

MP: Is it top secret today. Could it be revealed today some of the things you people . . .

KADEL: Some of it's . . . as far as I know, they say it's not de-classified yet, but some of this I have seen published in various books. But there's still a lot of it that I know is still under lock and key because it could still get us in trouble in certain

KADEL: parts of . . .

MP: That you . . . that somehow you were involved in in your roles, what you did?

KADEL: Yeah. We did something here in April that kind of surprised me. We were invited, when we were over in London, down to visit Churchill's war room underneath London. And it's not a public place, you know. It's locked up pretty good. And they took us down there and showed us a lot of things and . . . a lot of things that happened over in Burma and China that wasn't very well know. And, by gosh, they had it out on the wall down there on their situation maps and had a lot of information just laying around the room that was kind of . . .

MP: Did it . . . being subjected to the information that . . . you say that was this year?

KADEL: Yes, this year.

MP: Well, being subjected to that kind of information, did it make some of the pieces fall into place, the showing of it?

KADEL: It sure did. It sure did. It sure did.

MP: Can you think of anything in particular?

KADEL: Well, yes. There was . . . we were in a funny situation over in Burma. It was a different kind of war than they had anyplace else in the world. It was jungle warfare. We were /not/ only fighting Japanese, we were fighting the elements more than anything else. And we had rescue missions down there. Nothing was supposed to come out about the problems that we had with naga's, which were headhunters down there, because the Burmese were boiling mad anyhow about all this today. And we saw a lot of the effects of these naga raids in the rescues we had down there. A naga chieftain was killed with one of our pilots being hurt pretty bad at the same time. We never knew what happened to this naga chieftain or where they went to. And the British found out. And it got out . . . and, of course, the Burmese government finally got ahold of it and caused a lot of trouble with it. I didn't know what the result of it was until I got down there in the war room.

MP: Bob, how . . . you spent quite a bit of time . . . how many years did you say, in the Burma and Chinese theater?

KADEL: Oh, actually it was about three years. I mean on and off, you know, it was about three years.

MP: You said a little earlier you went on several rescue missions.

KADEL: Yes.

MP: Did you go on the rescue mission [involving] CBS news correspondent Eric Sevareid?

KADEL: No, I heard a lot about that.

MP: He was involved and apparently, I think, parachuted somewhere in that area.

KADEL: In the Hump area.

MP: And was reported missing as I recall for a time, and I'm just wondering if . . .

KADEL: [He] turned up.

MP: . . . he turned up where you . . . you were not in on that rescue?

KADEL: I've got the complete story of his that was just written, in fact, just . . . oh, within the last six, eight months. I just got it and finished reading it. It's pretty good. And it was . . . I know a lot of the fellows that were involved with that.

MP: But you yourself was not involved . . .

KADEL: No, not that one.

MP: . . . in the Eric Sevareid rescue?

KADEL: No. Huh-uh. No. That was a pretty good one. There were a few little mistakes in the story, I think, because I knew some of the men in there and knew where they were assigned. But, of course, that's for the story. A lot of the stories came out that way.

MP: Were you involved in any kind of . . . well,

MP: it was classified or de-classified action behind enemy lines?

KADEL: Just about everything was. (laughs)

MP: Behind enemy lines?

KADEL: Just about everything I had anything to do with.

MP: Any particular incident that you could relate without giving away any secrets or classified material?

KADEL: Well, most of this was in getting to areas where there were prisoners.

MP: Well, what was your role there? To rescue prisoners or . . .

KADEL: Well, no. We talked to them and . . .

MP: American prisoners?

KADEL: American prisoners, British prisoners.

MP: I don't understand. How would you . . . how do you mean you "talked to them"?

KADEL: Well, it's a little different over there. The prison isn't actually a prison wall. You know, a building with walls around it. Rangoon prison, for instance, had a lot of our military people in there. There was no hospital. We had to get down there and find out how to get them out of there.

MP: These were people who were Japanese prisoners of war?

KADEL: Um hm.

MP: Well, what . . . and you had to get . . . what did you say, you had to get . . .

KADEL: I did a lot of photographing of the area and . . .

MP: I see.

KADEL: . . . such as this.

MP: I see, but . . .

KADEL: That's a good way to say it.

MP: All right. O.K. So that it was low level I take it that you actually went into the area and did a lot of photographing.

KADEL: Right. Yes.

MP: And I take it that the photographs then became invaluable aids as to . . . it gave our people the idea of what our Americans were confined to and how they could be rescued.

KADEL: Well, there's several people that I've run onto recently . . . we have a pretty good China-Burma-India association. And I run into these fellows all the time that worked with us and were prisoners. We've had a couple of them here coming down to see us in a couple weeks that were prisoners at the River Kwai camp. And . . .

MP: Coming down where?

KADEL: Well, we'll get together down in Jasper County, Paoli. And it's going to have a big camp-out down there.

MP: I was going to ask you, you know, about the . . . of course, we're . . . all of us who enjoyed the movie, "Bridge on the River Kwai" . . .

KADEL: Naw. That was a good story. (laughs)

MP: Now, that was an area . . . that was an area that you were involved in?

KADEL: Right. Uh-huh.

MP: You say that was just a story or . . .

KADEL: Well, the movie was. The book was a pretty good book, but . . . and it was written real well. But it was written by a third party and . . .

MP: Was there a bridge on the River Kwai?

KADEL: Sure was. Two or three of them. (laughs) Or more! And if you don't believe it, you can ask these P.W.'s -- former P.W.'s. They could tell you

KADEL: a lot of things about the . . . but there were a lot of situations. And, of course, in Burma they have . . . they had the British, South Africans, of course

END OF SIDE 1

TAPE 2-SIDE 2

MP: So then you, of course, were involved in all of the China-Burma area and around to the bridge of the River Kwai and that sort of thing. We've talked a little bit about your military activities because, as I say, they were most unusual -- more so than the average serviceman had in World War II.

KADEL: Really, I say that because of this type activity. Being in this kind of a unit, sounds like you're doing a lot of bragging on this thing, but I could sit down and just go story after story. If I . . . I have a lot of color slides. I used 35 mm color during World War II, and there weren't many people doing that. I had a Leica and an old -- not an old one, it was new at that time -- Eastman Banam and plenty of color film. /My/ folks would always send me color film instead of sending me food like a lot of fellows wanted. They'd send me film. And so I made a lot of slides. I've got all these on 35 mm slides.

MP: Do you have them at home?

KADEL: Sure do!

MP: Of some of the things we've talked about here?

KADEL: Sure. And . . . most of it. (laughs) And it's hard to believe until you sit down and look at them, really.

MP: Well, as I said a moment ago, it isn't that you're bragging, and I should think that it would be something to brag about. But it wasn't. /It amounts to/ some unusual experiences.

Before we leave the military -- and I would like to, of course, dwell more time on it, but time is of the essence here -- is there any other thing in particular that you would relate about that?

KADEL: No, except I think that the military in World War II did as good a job as they could. The people in Vietnam did as good a job as they could, and Korea. I don't think that any one military person or ex-serviceman, you know, can really say that he's been treated any worse than any other military man. If you're in the military, you've got to expect a little rough treatment.

MP: Was it in World War II, that you developed your photography?

KADEL: Oh, I got interested in it down at Wiley, really. Dad had been interested in photography and had his own dark rooms. And when I got to Wiley, I did photographic work for the yearbook, and I had done some for Bill Cronin over at the Tribune as a high school . . .

MP: Mr. Cronin was the editor.

KADEL: He was the editor of the Terre Haute Tribune.

MP: And today . . . to this very day you, of course, are United Press International photographer, are you not?

KADEL: Yes, I do work In, oh, about a 60-mile radius of Terre Haute.

MP: Bob, after the service . . . we want to finish now -- I hope we've taken it chronologically -- we want to finish the Terre Haute story. You came out of the service, and I think you told us sometime ago in the interview now that your father was downtown from 1906 to, I believe you said, 1955 there at 7th . . . or near 7th and Wabash. Was it then that you . . . when did it become your business?

KADEL: Well, dad died in 1955 and his brother-in-law was helping him in the store at the time as more-or-less bookkeeper and such. Now, I was trying to take care of my own photographic business. And I had a place there in the shop, too. So I took over in 1955 after dad died. Uncle Albert Koll. He'd been with the Koll-Seamon Company here in Terre Haute. He owned it for years and years before. It was one of the old grocery companies in Terre Haute.

KADEL: And he was in there and I kept him on. My brother, who was a graduate of Rose-Hulman /or Rose-Poly/, worked for Paul Grafe Construction. And, of course, he wasn't interested in staying in Terre Haute. And I took over the gift shop and the picture framing and the whole bit. We kept it there at 709 Wabash until 1958. At that time I rented the building at 675 Wabash, /which/ was the old Thompson restaurant. We renovated that. It hadn't been used for many, many years. /The/ Candelora restaurant, I think, was the last one. And there was Davis restaurant. I don't know which was last, but it was rented from the Davis family that had Davis Apartments and such here in Terre Haute. We still rent from them today. But in 1978, I think it was /in/ '78, '79, we bought the building next door to us which housed at one time the Manor House and O'Day's restaurant /rented/ from the Hulman Company . . . from Mrs. Hulman. And Tony and I had talked about my taking a place over before he died, but we never got around to it. It was always . . . well, you know . . . kind of slow on things. So, finally I got it after he passed away. And then we opened our other store up in North Plaza Shopping Plaza, and we have a store up there now.

MP: When you came out of the service and, of course, took over the business, did you have at one time also a portrait photography studio?

KADEL: No, no portrait. It was photo-finishing . . .

MP: Just photo-finishing.

KADEL: . . . plant. And other commercial, industrial aerial photography.

MP: Nineteen /hundred/ fifty-five when you were in . . . took over the business downtown or you became involved in it as the head man so to speak, what was downtown like then? Could you see the beginning then of what has happened to it today? Or . . .

KADEL: No. No. Not . . .

MP: . . . what was downtown like in '55?

KADEL: 'Fifty-five, it was still pretty good. It was a good town. We had parking problems, of course, but not very bad. We didn't talk about parking too

KADEL: much then. We were parking on the streets and parking meters hadn't quite . . . I don't think they'd gotten here yet. I don't believe they had. Parking meters came in just a hair later.

But business was good. It was . . .

MP: A lot of people came downtown?

KADEL: A lot of people came downtown. Sears was doing a land-office business. Penney's were downtown. Meis and Herz and Levinson's was doing a good business down there. Of course, there was . . . oh, the big men's store down at 5th and Wabash.

MP: Would that be Tune Brothers?

KADEL: Jenkins had . . . Tune Brothers. Jenkins was in there at the time, you know. And . . .

MP: So downtown was bustling?

KADEL: It was good.

MP: How was the transportation?

KADEL: Bus service was pretty good. And, of course, people complained it wasn't there, but it was.

MP: Then how long did this . . . you say it was pretty good. How long did this last?

KADEL: Well, it lasted until this . . . 'til the bus strike. When was that? In late '50s?

MP: Bob, I was in the service in 1953 or '52 to '54, and I know that before I got out in '54 there was a bus strike. So I believe if we're talking about the bus strike, it was, I believe, in '54.

KADEL: The one that was so long.

MP: Yes. I'm told that that was it.

KADEL: Well, that's when everything went to pot.

MP: So really in '55 while it was good, maybe the year is . . .

KADEL: Yeah. It's just kind of hazy right there.

- MP: In other words, are you saying that the bus strike was the first sign?
- KADEL: The long one, the long . . . they had . . .
- MP: It hurt downtown.
- KADEL: It hurt bad.
- MP: How?
- KADEL: People couldn't get downtown, and they weren't used to driving their own cars. There weren't a lot of cars like there are now.
- MP: But I'm told that the bus strike forced people into cars.
- KADEL: They did. Forced them into cars.
- MP: And then that created a special problem downtown.
- KADEL: Boy, it sure did. Parking was . . . and then, of course, the city got greedy and put in parking meters.
- MP: What was your reaction . . . why was that done?
- KADEL: I don't know. They just . . . one day we just woke up and had them.
- MP: Did the downtown people have any input into that decision, do you recall?
- KADEL: Well, at the . . . (heh) I remember after it was done, we thought we'd fight the City Hall and we would feed the parking meter nickels and pennies. We had a little box of nickels and pennies that we kept feeding them because we knew that it was going to be a hardship on people. And it was. Nickels and pennies were hard to come by then. And, boy!
- MP: So it was sometime in the early '50s then, you're saying, with the bus strike that something happened downtown.
- KADEL: Yes, it was. People came downtown. We've never seemed to hurt for business. But then Meadows Center sprung up and North Plaza sprung up. It didn't hurt very much, but it gave people an idea that they could . . .

KADEL: wouldn't have to come downtown. They could go out to the fringe areas and do a little bit. There wasn't anything down south.

MP: Is this when we began then disintegration? Maybe that's not the proper word to use. But then the fact that the downtown . . . slowly people got away from the downtown?

KADEL: Yes. After . . . I'd say at the end of the '50s Terre Haute forgot about trying to decorate downtown for Christmas. And Terre Haute was always a beautiful place for Christmas. Plenty of street decorations. A lot of promotions. We had a lot of things going at the Terre Haute House even in the '60s. But then it started going down, downhill. Just a lot of things that . . . I don't know.

MP: Until we come to the present situation.

KADEL: Yes.

MP: And there isn't much activity there any more, is there?

KADEL: Well, really our business is good downtown. It's not bad at all. We've tried to stick with the best products, give the customer personal service instead of having a check-out counter. We have our clerks -- people in the store that talk to the customers and find out what they're looking for. And we help them. And so many stores today, you just go get what you want off the shelf and go to the check-out counter and that's it. You never see a clerk in the store. We've recently opened up our store next door with cake-making and candy-making equipment and accessories. We have classes for these, and it's doing a good business itself. And we just started this business in October.

MP: Do you think one aspect of it is that Kadel has been in the community so long. It's a name that's established itself?

KADEL: I don't know whether the name is really that important any more as long as you can give them the service.

MP: And yet while so many people have moved from downtown and we have so many empty spaces down there now, you have stayed in the downtown area.

KADEL: Yes. I had an opportunity to go to Honey Creek Square. Bill Schmidt /who/ runs it down there was in the Air National Guard with me many years out at Hulman Field. And before they even built that, he asked me about it, and I couldn't . . . I didn't want to go down to /Honey Creek Square/.

MP: Why have you elected or decided to stay where you are?

KADEL: Well, I'd like to stay where we are really. Of course, I'm not against progress. I'd like to see them do something downtown, but I'd like to see them do something practical -- not just for monetary gain where they knock all these businesses out just so another group can come in and make more money on the people that have been here.

MP: What do you see ahead for downtown?

KADEL: Well . . .

MP: Evidently you're going to play some role in it.

KADEL: Pete Chalos and I are pretty good friends, and Jim McDonald who's working on this project. But we've all sat down and talked this thing over, and we came to the conclusion that if we could get people that were working on this downtown project that were sincere and honest and truthful with us about what they're going to do, we wouldn't mind going along with them. We would like to work with them. But if they're going to come in and lie to us and keep things from us, work behind our backs, we don't want anything to do with them.

MP: You don't feel as though you've been treated fairly?

KADEL: I don't think that we've been treated fairly. I think that Pete's been lied to. I know Jim has. I know I have. And we never get the same answer twice. We've been told that through these federal

KADEL: monies they can do anything they damned well please, and I don't agree with that.

MP: Well, there, of course, is talk of future downtown development -- some type of shopping mall is what we were told some months ago. Are you going to be a part of this?

KADEL: We would be if the right thing comes along. We don't know whether this Hocker thing is the right thing or not. And we don't know whether it'll go. I understand that today the mayor made a statement . . . or yesterday made the statement that either they do or they go. We'll get somebody else. I don't know. Have you heard this?

MP: No, I haven't.

KADEL: This was . . . oh, it was on the radio this morning. I don't know whether it was yours or not but someplace.

MP: None of us have a crystal ball.

KADEL: No.

MP: But if you could see 10 to 15 years down the road, Bob, what do you think is going to happen downtown?

KADEL: Well, there's just . . . our area for instance down there. We know the buildings are old. They're not bad buildings. They can be overhauled and . . . in fact, I want to do it right now, but I hate to do it, hate to spend my money right now unless I know what's going to happen. If they're going to tear us down, we don't want to repair it right now -- remodel the whole structure. But it could be remodeled and be good for another 15-20 years. But we've got areas downtown that should be . . . well, the whole thing should be better planned. There should be a plan that will work. After they say they have the finances to do this project, then make their plans and say, O.K., we're going to do it. The way it is now, they've got all these big plans and no money.

MP: As somebody whose family has been associated with the downtown area for many, many years as you yourself, are there some buildings down there now

MP: that should and could be preserved for historical purposes?

KADEL: Well, I don't know. I don't know why they should be preserved. Terre Haute isn't that hard put for historical value. Such . . . we have Fort Harrison; we have the courthouse; we have bits and parts of other old structures. The Preston house they've been trying to preserve. But downtown, the Terre Haute House should be put to use. They should preserve that and put it into use. Or tear it down and use the area for something else.

I don't know how you can say that it should be preserved historically or not, because there aren't going to be that many people in the United States interested in Terre Haute even though they've lived in Terre Haute. I don't think they're going to be that interested in it.

They weren't interested in preserving the Root's Store or Wiley High School or Garfield High School. They destroyed them, and those were historically pretty good buildings.

MP: We've talked for a long time, any final thoughts?

KADEL: Well, I don't plan on leaving Terre Haute permanently. I like to travel now a little bit now and then. But Terre Haute's still my home, and I like the people in Terre Haute and always have. I think they're some of the best damned people in the country. But when you meet people from Terre Haute wherever you go even though Terre Haute does get a black eye every once in a while . . .

MP: Bob, thank you very much. We've talked for several hours. I've enjoyed it very much, and I appreciate your taking the time to take part in this oral history interview.

KADEL: Well, thank you, Martin. I know it's a lot of bull, but I've had a lot of fun.

MP: I don't think so.

This has been an oral history interview with Bob Kadel June 12th, Friday afternoon, in the conference room of the Vigo County Public Library.

END OF TAPE

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